




# A Structural Equation Modeling Study of Parental Psychological Control, Emotion Regulation Difficulties, and Depressive Symptoms among Adolescents: The Mediating Role of Rejection Sensitivity

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## 1. Round 1

### 1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the final paragraph of the Introduction, the authors write, “the present study aimed to examine the direct and indirect relationships among parental psychological control, emotion regulation difficulties, rejection sensitivity, and depressive symptoms.” Although the aim is clearly stated, no explicit hypotheses are presented. Given that the study uses SEM and mediation testing, it would be methodologically stronger to formulate and number specific hypotheses (e.g., H1–H6) regarding direct effects, indirect effects, and sequential mediation pathways.

In the Study Design and Participants section, the manuscript states that “a multistage cluster sampling procedure was used to recruit participants from selected urban and suburban schools.” However, insufficient detail is provided regarding the sampling framework. The authors should specify the exact number of school districts, schools, and classrooms selected at each stage, as well as response rates and participation rates. These details are essential for evaluating the representativeness of the sample and the potential influence of cluster effects.

In Table 2, the authors report standardized factor loadings ranging from .75 to .88. Although these values are satisfactory, the manuscript does not provide factor correlations among latent variables. Reporting latent construct correlations would allow

readers to assess discriminant validity and determine whether multicollinearity may be influencing the structural model estimates.

In the Results section, the authors note that “The measurement model demonstrated an excellent fit to the observed data.” However, the  $\chi^2$  statistic for the measurement model itself is not reported. Since the measurement and structural models are evaluated separately, full fit statistics for the CFA model should be presented, including  $\chi^2$ , degrees of freedom,  $\chi^2/df$  ratio, CFI, TLI, RMSEA, SRMR, and confidence intervals.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

### 1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the same section, the authors report that “742 adolescents participated in the research” and that “718 questionnaires were retained for the final analysis.” The manuscript does not sufficiently explain the exclusion of 24 participants. The authors should provide detailed information regarding missing data thresholds, criteria for identifying multivariate outliers, response inconsistency procedures, and the exact number of cases removed for each reason.

The paragraph describing the Psychological Control Scale–Youth Self-Report indicates that “previous studies have generally ranged from .75 to .86” for reliability coefficients. However, the manuscript does not report reliability estimates obtained in the current sample. Internal consistency indices (Cronbach’s alpha, McDonald’s omega, or composite reliability) should be reported for all study measures using the present dataset rather than relying exclusively on previous literature.

In the Measures section, the authors describe the DERS as a multidimensional instrument consisting of six subscales. However, it is unclear whether the SEM used the total DERS score, parcel scores, or latent factors representing the six dimensions. The measurement strategy should be described more precisely because the interpretation of the latent variable structure depends heavily on how the indicators were constructed.

The Data Analysis section states that “a measurement model was evaluated through confirmatory factor analysis.” However, important psychometric information is missing. The authors should report Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Composite Reliability (CR), Maximum Shared Variance (MSV), and discriminant validity indices. These statistics are standard practice in SEM studies and would provide stronger evidence for construct validity.

The manuscript reports that “Values of CFI, TLI, and IFI greater than .90 and RMSEA and SRMR values below .08 were considered indicative of acceptable model fit.” While these thresholds are commonly used, more contemporary SEM literature frequently recommends stricter cutoffs (e.g., CFI/TLI  $\geq$  .95 and RMSEA  $\leq$  .06). The authors should justify their chosen criteria and discuss model fit according to current methodological recommendations.

In Table 1, the authors state that “The skewness and kurtosis values for all variables fell within acceptable ranges (–1.5 to +1.5).” However, neither skewness nor kurtosis values are actually presented in the table. These descriptive statistics should either be included in Table 1 or removed from the narrative description to maintain consistency between the results and the reported analyses.

The paragraph following Table 1 concludes that “the assumption of univariate normality was satisfied.” Yet SEM requires consideration of multivariate normality as well. The manuscript should report Mardia’s coefficient or other multivariate normality diagnostics, especially because maximum likelihood estimation appears to have been used.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

## 2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.